



HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES



# ANNUAL REPORT



2021  
FISCAL YEAR

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# INTRODUCTION

**Keep Charlotte Beautiful (KCB) Committee** is a volunteer-based affiliate of Keep America Beautiful (KAB) established in 1974. KCB's goals are to:

1. Promote partnership between residents, private organizations, businesses, and government agencies to ensure the City of Charlotte sustains a clean and healthy environment.
2. Enhance public awareness of litter control ordinances
3. Enhance public awareness of recycling
4. Encourage and promote community service
5. Sponsor and conduct various programs directed toward the purpose of developing and maintaining a clean, healthy, and safe community
6. Represent neighborhoods and residents in matters related to the above-stated purposes

The committee has twenty members: 13 appointed by Charlotte City Council and 7 by the Mayor. They meet the first Tuesday of every other month and conduct various subcommittee meetings in the interim. The committee currently contains four subcommittees that support the programming of Keep Charlotte Beautiful: the Great American Cleanup Committee, Beautification Grant Committee, Central Avenue Committee, and Adopt a City Street Committee.

## **Committee members as of June 30, 2021 were:**

ROLE	NAME(S)
City Staff	Nicole Storey (Executive Director), Jonathan Hill (Program Manager), Allison Lavallee (AmeriCorps Service Member)
Chair	Jon Giles
Secretary	Iris Hudson
Committee Member	RB Monroe, Ryon Smalls, Lily Taylor, Casey Brewer, Thanh Vu, Kyle Coulom, Jessica Mathewson, Caroline Sawyer, Wendy Sellers, Qnubia Umazar, Edebierto Torres, Dawon Millwood, Caroline Burgett, Octavia Arthur, Martin Doss, Myka Alexandria, Irlanda Ruiz, and Sharon Pearson



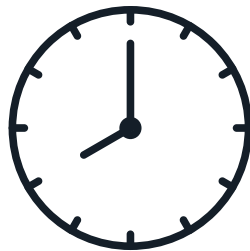
# ANNUAL PROGRAMS

# ADOPT A CITY STREET (AACS) PROGRAM

KCB Staff manages the Adopt-a-City-Street program, a year- round opportunity for businesses, neighborhoods and other volunteers to adopt 1-mile or greater street sections to supplement the City's litter collection efforts. Program participants commit to clean their adopted section(s) at least three (3) times per year. In return, participants receive two (2) signs displaying their organization name at locations of their choice along the adopted route, litter cleanup supplies on a lending basis, and recognition through volunteer events and social media.

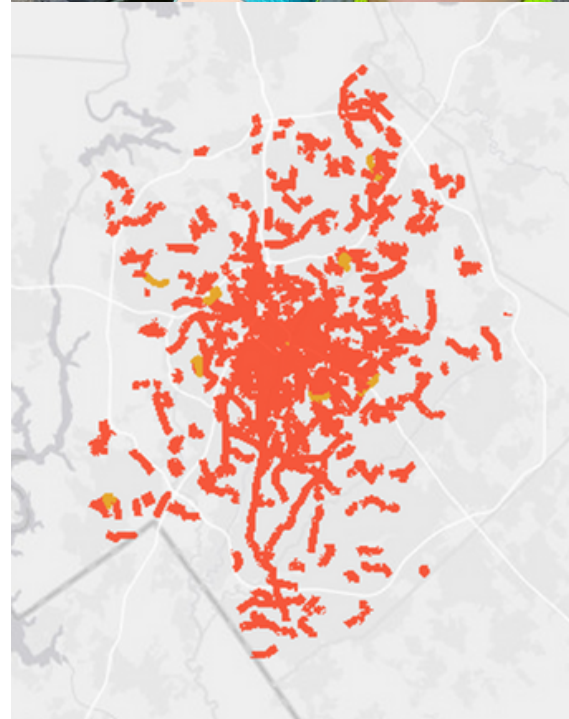


2100 BAGS  
COLLECTED



4800 VOLUNTEER  
HOURS

Like many city programs, Adopt a City Street was impacted by the coronavirus. In order to manage supply distribution and prevent indoor exposure among volunteers, KCB staff limited supply pickup to Old City Hall. Nevertheless, over 350 groups contributed almost 4800 hours in picking up over 2100 bags of litter throughout the city. This is 10% increase in the amount of litter picked up in FY20. New volunteers adopted an additional 89 miles of road throughout the city.



# COMMUNITY APPEARANCE INDEX (LITTER INDEX)

Once per year, trained KCB Committee members and volunteers visit 70 pre-determined locations throughout the City to measure the presence of roadside litter, rating each street section on the following scale:

**1:**

Minimal or no litter, easily collected by one individual

**2:**

Slightly littered, eyes are not continually grabbed by littered items

**3:**

Littered, organized effort needed for complete litter removal

**4:**

Extremely littered, continuous amount of litter that may need to be professionally removed

Litter index results are used as a tool to communicate the City's success in preventing visual blight through litter prevention efforts to City officials, Solid Waste Services and interested residents.

## LITTER INDEX COMPARISONS BY DISTRICT, 2016-2021

Year	Dist. 1	Dist. 2	Dist. 3	Dist. 4	Dist. 5	Dist. 6	Dist. 7	Total Overall	% Change Over Previous Year
2016	1.67	2.0	2.23	1.87	1.7	1.83	1.33	1.8	-1.6%
2017	1.83	1.7	1.65	1.77	1.93	1.2	1.28	1.62	-10%
2018	1.97	2.0	2.0	1.6	1.85	1.5	1.3	1.75	8.2%
2019	1.8	2.15	1.95	2.3	1.9	1.4	1.23	1.82	1.1%
2020	1.9	1.85	1.3	2.0	2.3	1.85	1.5	1.81	-0.24%
2021	1.77	2.35	1.85	2.0	2.15	1.3	1.45	1.84	1.34%
% Change 2020-21	6.84% Decrease	27.03% Increase	42.31% Increase	0% Increase	6.52% Decrease	29.73% Decrease	3.33% Decrease	1.34% Increase	

# COMMUNITY GRANTS



## KCB Beautification Grant

KCB awards up to \$5,000 each year to neighborhoods, schools, and/or non-profit organizations for community beautification projects. In FY21, KCB received 24 Letters of Intent (LOI's). Upon committee review, eleven applicants were invited to submit formal applications. Applicants not selected are referred to neighborhood liaisons for support and complementary programs for consideration, including Neighborhood Board Retreats, TreesCharlotte and Neighborhood Matching Grants.

**This year's Beautification Grant was awarded to Ravenwood Neighborhood Association, Villa Heights Neighborhood Association, and the Highland Mill Montessori Parent-Teacher Association.**

These organizations used the funds for community garden and butterfly highway projects in their respective communities.



Ravenwood Community Garden



Before: Highland Mill Montessori School



After: Butterfly Garden Installation

# Beautification Microgrants

This spring, Keep Charlotte Beautiful awarded \$500 beautification microgrants to 17 different projects focused on litter prevention, waste reduction and recycling, beautification, and community greening. These grants were awarded to a diverse group of nonprofits and public sector organizations that spanned council districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7.

Four of these grants went to different Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to help educate students on these key tenants of environmental responsibility, including a memorial garden at Park Road Montessori, litter cleanup supplies for Chantilly Montessori, an outdoor classroom at North Ridge Middle School, and community garden at Statesville Road Elementary. These grants helped fund projects in new areas for Keep Charlotte Beautiful while introducing organizations to services offered by the city KCB looks forward to continued partnerships with these organizations.



# CENTRAL AVENUE CLEANUPS

Keep Charlotte Beautiful's committee traditionally maintains approximately one mile of Central Avenue through the Adopt a City Street Program. Because of the pandemic, the committee had to cancel two of its four traditional cleanups; however, it was about to conduct board-only, socially distanced cleanups in December 2020 and April 2021. The committee required masks and temperature checks, and over 20 volunteers picked up more than 50 bags of trash between these two cleanups. Moving forward, the Central Avenue cleanup committee will cede this section of road to the local neighborhood and instead focus on conducting quarterly cleanups with neighborhoods along priority streets throughout the city.



## AMERICA RECYCLES DAY

Individual recycling action and behavior were the themes of this year's America Recycles Day, a Keep America Beautiful national program and the only nationally recognized day dedicated to promoting and celebrating recycling in the United States. To educate the Charlotte community and collaborate with other local sustainability organizations in the area, KCB selected a panel consisting of recycling and waste reduction experts to discuss the topic of 'wishful recycling,' the action of placing mixed and nonrecyclable objects in the recycling bin.

The panel featured representatives from organizations including Envision Charlotte, Goodwill Industries of Southern Piedmont, and Crown Town Compost, in addition to representatives from city services including the directors of both City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County Solid Waste Services. The virtual panel allowed citizens from across the city to join the conversation from home and have the opportunity to learn and ask the experts questions on recycling behavior, available resources, and which items the City can and cannot recycle.





# FISCAL YEAR 2021 HIGHLIGHTS



# INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

Keep Charlotte Beautiful frequently partners with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services and Park and Recreation to host cleanup events, and this year was no exception. Through joint cleanups events on both streets, streams, and parks (and sometimes all three), volunteers contributed over 800 hours and picked up over 12000 pounds of trash. This not only included one-time cleanups, but extended challenges. In August 2020, KCB encouraged volunteers to clean their storm drains during there street adoptions and share pictures on social media. This summer, volunteers are participating in the 'Clean Streets & Streams' challenge, where the team that collects the most litter winning special prizes from both KCB and Storm Water Services. Keep Charlotte Beautiful and Storm Water Services have also worked with the Metropolitan to host a quarterly cleanup series along Little Sugar Creek and the surrounding streets.





# CASTROL CLEANUP

In early March, Castrol Motor Oil approached Keep America Beautiful about hosting cleanups in various cities with its two sponsored sports teams: the Los Angeles Rams and NASCAR Driver Ryan Newman. Charlotte was selected as the first city to hold a cleanup, and our team set to work producing a successful event. Keep Charlotte Beautiful chose Freedom Drive as the site for the cleanup because of its proximity to neighborhoods already involved with our program, definition as a corridor of opportunity, and frequent litter.



KCB partnered with Town Brewing to offer an event space and food for all patrons. Over 60 volunteers ultimately came out on a warm Tuesday afternoon to pick up litter, including Councilmember Victoria Watlington, the Ryan Newman race crew, representatives from Keep America Beautiful, local media crews and dozens of Keep Charlotte Beautiful volunteers. This group picked up over 700 pounds of litter over the course of just one and a half hours. In recognition of this feat, Castrol Motor Oil donated \$1000 to Keep Charlotte Beautiful, \$500 to the Camp Greene Neighborhood Association, and \$500 to the Greater Enderly Park Neighborhood Association. KCB looks forward to more events of this caliber in the future.



60

TOTAL NUMBER OF  
VOLUNTEERS

700

POUNDS OF LITTER  
COLLECTED

\$1000

DONATED TO  
LOCAL  
NEIGHBORHOODS

# CARES Act Cleanup Supplies

KCB received over \$30,000 in CARES Act funding to distribute 'permanent' supplies to active groups. This allowed us to purchase supplies for nearly 1800 volunteers, or over 150 groups. Accomplishing the distribution of supplies was no easy task. The KCB team collected important program feedback along with supply demand, coordinated purchasing through multiple vendors, secured warehouse space to store the supplies through a board member, and distributed nearly 95% of the supplies by July 2021. This process reduced strain on our supply lending program and saved our volunteers the time and resources needed to travel all the way to Uptown to pick up supplies. As part of this process, Keep Charlotte Beautiful also secured agreements with two nonprofit partners to serve as lending locations one the pandemic subsides: the Keith Richardson YMCA and the Charlotte Toolbank.



## Plogging

Plogging, or picking up litter while jogging, is a movement created in Sweden to encourage environmental stewardship while exercising outdoors. The activity has caught on in the United States, with Keep America Beautiful being a major proponent.

Thanks to partnerships with NoDa Brewing and the Around the Crown 10k group, Keep Charlotte Beautiful assisted in hosting several plogging events this year. Over 40 volunteer runners picked up litter around Druid Hills and Beatties Ford area as part of the Camp North End relay event in the Fall. On Earth Day, another 35 volunteer runners picked up litter around Windsor Park before a larger celebration at the Charlotte Urban Farm. This September, KCB will encourage 'speed plogging' participation during the Around the Crown 10k in Uptown; for every runner who picks up at least 10 pieces of trash, they'll receive a KCB pin to attach to their medal. As plogging expands through Charlotte, Keep Charlotte Beautiful aims partner with neighborhoods and running groups to bring plogging events to the Thomasboro-Hoskins area in the Spring of 2022.

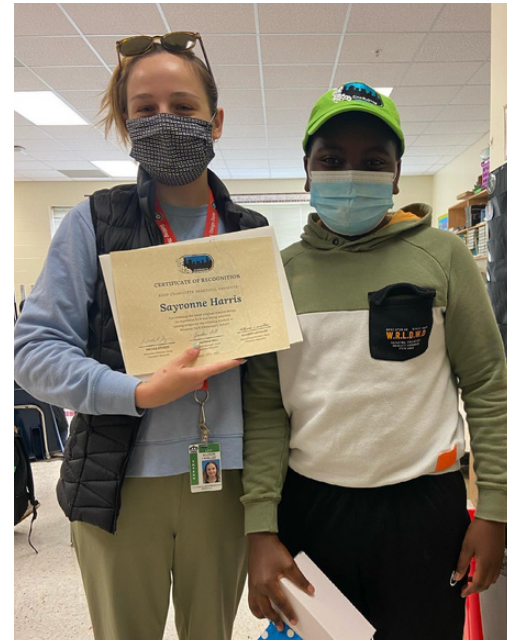


# AmeriCorps

**2020-21 SERVICE MEMBER: ALLISON LAVALLEE**

To increase the capacity of KCB to engage in the community and educate the public, the program hosted an AmeriCorps Service Member from September 2020 through July 2021. AmeriCorps is a national service program designed to support environmental education, stewardship and outreach that builds bridges between conservation organizations and the local communities they seek to serve.

A primary responsibility of the AmeriCorps member was to develop engaging and educational lessons centered around KCB's four pillars of reducing waste, litter prevention, beautification, and city greening with the goal of bringing these presentations into local schools and teaching youth the value of keeping our city clean, green, and beautiful. The first step in the process involved working with a local teacher from Windsor Park Elementary School who had previously partnered with KCB to better understand curriculum standards and overall lesson planning. KCB developed five, 30-minute lessons on the following topics:



RECYCLING



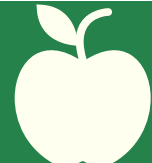
WASTE REDUCTION



REUSING  
MATERIALS



CITY BEAUTIFICATION



FOOD WASTE

KCB conducted the first pilot educational lessons with the students of Windsor Park in grades K-5. In the time of virtual learning, each presentation used resources such as PowerPoint to deliver information effectively to learners via Zoom. Each lesson consisted of various videos, readings, and interactive activities for students to engage even while being at home.

Teaching professionals provided feedback and revisions for each lesson to align them with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction curriculum standards for social studies and environmental science. KCB developed written lesson plans in coordination with each presentation which allows program staff or teachers in the classroom without the presence of staff to teach the lessons. These plans allow teachers flexibility in the programming while still providing all the necessary materials and information to students.

# MASCOT CONTEST WITH WINDSOR PARK ELEMENTARY

Additionally, KCB hosted a mascot contest at Windsor Park to design the first-ever character to represent the program. A panel of KCB board members, volunteers, and community organizers selected a winner out of over 200 submissions.

The next step is to develop and further render this character into a professional 2D cartoon mascot to share across KCB platforms, printed materials, and eventually incorporated into an educational coloring book. Moving forward, KCB anticipates the next AmeriCorps member to expand upon the developed lessons, include lessons for middle and high school aged students, and make more partnerships in local schools to provide the programming more widely across the City.



Sayvonne Harris, 5th Grader, created the winning mascot character (left)



Nick Stavros, Graphic Designer for the City, interpreted Sayvonne's original design (right)